

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 2, 2020

The Honorable Sonny Perdue  
Secretary  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

The Honorable Kevin Norton  
Acting Chief  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
United States Department of Agriculture  
1400 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue and Acting Chief Norton,

We write to support the City of Glenwood Springs, Colorado in their request for Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assistance under the Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Program at the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), including the requested cost share arrangement. These federal resources will provide critical relief to address and reduce threats to life and property that the recent wildfire in the area caused.

Colorado is managing threats from multiple wildfires burning across the state. The Grizzly Creek Fire, currently burning in Glenwood Canyon along Interstate 70, poses one of the most significant threats to infrastructure and the nearby watershed. The Grizzly Creek Fire has created a number of hazards to the City of Glenwood Springs and the surrounding area, including community evacuations, shutting down major transportation corridors, and will negatively affect vegetation, the watershed, and the drinking water supply for years to come.

The City relies upon a community water supply system that provides drinking water for 9,614 residents. The Grizzly Creek Fire has forced the City of Glenwood Springs to use their temporary emergency backup water diversion source. Following fire suppression, immediate actions to reduce erosion, sedimentation, and prevent flooding will be critical. Restoring the watershed and mitigating future hazards is expected to take many years. According to the Colorado Water Conservation Board, it will likely take seven years for the watershed to recover.

The pandemic continues to stress the budgets of state and local governments, forcing many to consider spending cuts simply to ensure they can continue to facilitate basic government services. The Grizzly Creek Fire is expected to further exacerbate local budgets creating uncertainty over funding for future critical projects, such as restoration and infrastructure repair, that will be necessary to maintain a clean drinking water supply. For these reasons, and many more, we support the City's request that the cost share requirement for emergency mitigation projects be 90 percent for NRCS and 10 percent for the sponsor.

We thank you for the work USDA has already done to support our communities as they battle ongoing wildfires and urge swift approval of the City of Glenwood Springs' request for NRCS assistance at the 90 percent NRCS and 10 percent sponsor cost share arrangement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cory Gardner", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cory Gardner  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael F. Bennet", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael F. Bennet  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Scott Tipton", with a large circular flourish above the name.

Scott Tipton  
Member of Congress